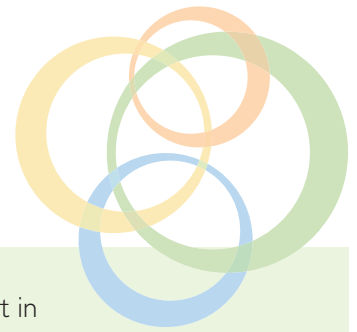


Cumberland County Schools Teacher Incentive Fund Program



The Cumberland County Schools TIF (CCS TIF) aims to serve the fourth largest district in North Carolina. The CCS TIF will pilot in five schools (280 teachers, 5 principals, 9 assistant principals, and about 3,300 students). The pilot schools were selected because they have low overall academic achievement, serve high-poverty populations, have high teacher turnover, have large numbers of teachers with emergency/provisional licenses, and have principals who have demonstrated support of TIF. The CCS TIF intervenes using differentiated compensation to reward educators for raising student achievement. Professional learning communities will be created in each school to help educators meet the criteria for reward.

Needs Assessment Results and General Information

The CCS is the largest county in North Carolina designated as low wealth. Further, the median income is more than \$5,000 below the national median and is \$1,500 below the state average. The district serves about 54,000 students (pre-K 12). In 2003, it was estimated that 20 percent of these students lived in poverty; 53 percent were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and 62 percent were minority. Local military bases dominate the economy but do not proportionately add to the tax base that funds schools. The CCS district did not make AYP (it met 65 of 78 performance targets).

Background

The CCS TIF will pursue two main goals to effect change in student achievement: (1) The CCS TIF will improve achievement in high-need schools by increasing educator effectiveness through the creation of professional learning communities. The communities will increase professional development

activities and establish model classrooms to demonstrate effective instructional methods. (2) The CCS TIF will implement a sustainable differentiated compensation system to recruit and retain high-quality teachers in high-need schools. Differential compensation will be coupled with increased capacity to conduct comprehensive personnel evaluations.

Incentives

The incentive plan was developed and implemented during the 2007-08 school year, under the following guidelines: teachers are eligible to receive incentives totaling a maximum of \$10,000, and principals are eligible to receive a maximum of \$5,000. There are three levels of reward for teachers—Level I payments are based on student performance; Level II payments focus on attainment of advanced credentials; and Level III payments are designated for Model Classroom leaders. There are two levels of reward for principals—Level I payments are based on professional growth and leadership activities, and Level II payments are based on achieving student growth targets.

Location(s)	Cumberland County, North Carolina
Award Date	June 2007
Duration	5 years
Partners	None

Evaluation

The CCS has well-established evaluation processes in place for educators, but does not adequately address continual monitoring and support of educators. Under the TIF, schools will establish evaluation teams to fill this void.

Resources

The CCS received more than \$3 million for incentive payments based on school-wide growth. An additional \$300,000 was disbursed for retention bonuses. The CCS TIF budget ceased reliance on Federal TIF funds to meet the required decrease by Year 5. A TIF subcommittee will research and obtain matching funds. Based on current funding, the Disadvantaged Student Supplement Fund will be able to contribute substantial monies.

Data Systems

The North Carolina education system has a well-developed web-based data warehousing system to capture, assess, and report student information. The CCS TIF partners with the Cumberland County Schools Testing Department to implement the TIF incentive formula for differentiated compensation.

Year 2 Activities

In TIF Year 2, professional learning communities were successfully implemented in all pilot schools. Eighteen model classrooms were designated in the schools, reporting 162 visitations. Cumberland County Schools will award nearly \$340,000 in TIF rewards for Year 2 based on student achievement and leadership roles.

Outlook for Year 3

For TIF Year 3, CCS will increase targeted professional development for pilot schools to address deficiencies identified in the analysis of standardized assessments. Model classrooms will continue to provide real-time observation of best practices and research-based instructional strategies that will, ultimately, improve student performance and the quality of instruction within the pilot schools.